



THE LORD'S FLOCK GROWTH DIGEST

PASTORAL GROWTH SERIES

What's Underneath

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What's underneath refers to the person's character, especially in times of crisis. As Christians, we must relentlessly examine ourselves to attain Godly character and to choose rightly a Christian model. As an image of God, it is important to achieve Godly character, and regularly examine our life since we are a testimony of the Gospel of God to the world.

1. How do we know the character of the person?

We know the character by its fruits

- 1.1. "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or make the tree bad, and its fruit bad; for the tree is known by its fruit" (Mt. 12:33).
- 1.2. "The good man out of his good treasure brings forth good, and the evil man out of his evil treasure brings forth evil" (Mt. 12:35).
- 1.3. "But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control" (Gal. 5:22).

2. The danger of the character test is the existence of counterfeits / false prophets.

- 2.1. Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world." (1Jn. 4:1).
- 2.2. "And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. So, it is not strange if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds" (2 Cor. 11:14).

3. How do Christians act in a difficult situation and improve their character?

Christians are not exempted from suffering, so they must handle that situation well. They must trust in the LORD

for His provision and protection. They should be faithful to Him to be able to pass through the tests. Christians' perfect responses to suffering inspire others to do the same. Hence, a seasoned Christian character is a tool for evangelization. It is a testimony for others that eventually leads to God.

4. Four things you must know about character:

- 4.1. Character is more than talk. Our character as Christians is reviewed by how we live (2 Cor. 3:3) and our works (Jam. 2:18).
- 4.2. Talent is a gift, but the character is a choice. It is a matter of will to gain a good Christian character for it cannot be bought (Prov. 2:1) but can only be done by practice.
- 4.3. Character brings lasting success to people.
- 4.4. People cannot rise above the limitation of their character. Successful Christians must continue to be humble and to keep going.

5. Why is character important and how to achieve it ultimately?

As Christians, our character is the shopfront for others; it is the witness of our Christian belief. Our character can influence others and can impact the world. However, due to sin, we have a distorted view of good character, but Jesus Christ, the true image of God, (Col. 1:15), has shown us man's ideal character. Therefore, we should change our old character and adapt into Christ's image (Eph. 4:24).

Conclusion:

Christians must continue to attain Godly character. It is a process of passing through a lot of spiritual battles and constantly examining it.

Reflection:

1. How do you cope with different spiritual tests?
2. What are the ways you test against counterfeit prophets?
3. How do you examine your Christian life for gaining more Godly character?

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